



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/553,107	04/20/2000	Edward S. Ellis	GJH-0018	4538

27810 7590 08/16/2004

EXXONMOBIL RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING COMPANY
P.O. BOX 900
1545 ROUTE 22 EAST
ANNANDALE, NJ 08801-0900

EXAMINER

JOHNSON, JERRY D

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1764

DATE MAILED: 08/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/553,107	ELLIS ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jerry D. Johnson	1764	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 9-12, 16 and 18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 9-12, 16 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Art Unit: 1764

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on July 9, 2004 has been entered.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-7, 9-12, 16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harrison et al.

Harrison et al, U.S. Patent 5,292,428, teach a process wherein hydrocarbon feedstock is passed through two or more hydrodesulfurization zones and connected in a series each containing a packed bed of solid catalyst. The liquid is passed from the first zone to the next until the final zone. Make up hydrogen is supplied to a hydrodesulfurization zone (i) other than the first hydrodesulfurization zone; hydrogen-containing gas is recovered from each hydrodesulfurization zone. The first hydrodesulfurization zone is supplied with hydrogen-containing gas recovered from a subsequent hydrodesulfurization zone (abstract). If the feedstock is, for example a diesel feedstock then the reaction conditions used in the process will typically be chosen to reduce the residual sulphur content to about 0.5 wt % S or less, e.g. about 0.3 wt % S or less, even down to about 0.05 wt % S or less and to reduce the aromatics content

Art Unit: 1764

to about 27 volume % or lower, e.g. to about 20 volume % or less (column 9, lines 35-41).

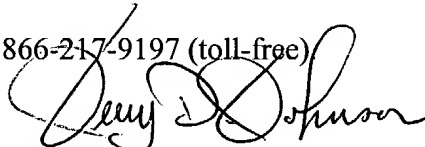
There will be used an amount of hydrogen which is equivalent to at least the stoichiometric amount of hydrogen required to desulphurise the feedstock and to achieve the desired degree of dearomatisation. Normally it will be preferred to use at least about 1.05 times such stoichiometric amount of hydrogen (column 10, lines 3-9). The process can be carried out in a plant having two hydrodesulphurisation zones or in one having more than two such zones, for example 3, 4, 5, or more (column 10, lines 22-25). Different hydrodesulphurisation conditions may be used in different zones (column 10, lines 26-65). In column 18 of Harrison et al, Tables 1-3, heavy gas vacuum oil feedstock having 2.23 weight % sulphur content is converted to a product having 31 ppm S and 15.9 vol % aromatics. While Harrison et al. differ from the instant claims in not requiring that a portion of the hydrogen-containing treat gas used in the first hydrodesulfurization stage is supplied from a source other than the present multi-stage process, in column 16, lines 33+, Harrison et al. teach that the sulphur content of the liquid feedstock in line 1 and that of the gas in line 7 are carefully monitored, to check that the H_2S partial pressure at the inlet to reactor 5 remains above a predetermined minimum value sufficient to maintain the catalyst charge adequately sulphided; if this H_2S level should, for any reason, fall below this minimum safe level, then an appropriate amount of, *inter alia*, H_2S or COS is supplied to raise the H_2S level to the required value. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to follow the above teachings, i.e., add H_2S , COS, or another sulfur-containing gas (including a hydrogen stream containing H_2S generated from a source other than the present multi-stage process) to the hydrogen-containing treat gas used in the first hydrodesulfurization stage as taught by Harrison et al.

Art Unit: 1764

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jerry D. Johnson whose telephone number is (571) 272-1448. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:00-3:30, M-F, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glen Caldarola can be reached on (571) 272-1444. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free)



Jerry D. Johnson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1764

jdj